



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
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## 2020 CENSUS PROGRAM MEMORANDUM SERIES: 2021.12

**Date:** May 10, 2021

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** The Record

**From:** Albert E. Fontenot, Jr. (**signed May 10, 2021**)  
Associate Director, Decennial Census Programs

**Subject:** Updates to the Geographic Programs Operation, Geographic Data Processing  
Detailed Operational Plan

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This memorandum documents specific updates that have been made to the plan for the Geographic Programs Operation (GEOP)—Geographic Data Processing Component since the release of the Geographic Programs operation—Geographic Data Processing [Detailed Operational Plan](#) (DOP) on September 13, 2016. The Geographic Data Processing production component of the Geographic Programs operation is responsible for the scope, schedule, and budget for the creation of geographic products to support the 2020 Census. This includes the creation of products to conduct the mailout of materials—including the census questionnaire or invitation—and all field data collection operations. This component is responsible for the updates from field operations to the Master Address File/Topologically Integrated Geographic Encoding and Referencing (MAF/TIGER) database and the creation of the final tabulation products. The products include MAF Extracts, Geographic Reference Files, Geocoding Services, digital spatial data, as well as paper maps.

The changes to the baselined DOP and clarifications documented in this memorandum are based on continued planning and development to support the Geographic Programs operation for the 2020 Census. Updates to section 2.2 of the DOP are shown in the following paragraph, and the set of revisions is in the table below. The table represents changes to Figure 14: MAF/TIGER Address and Spatial Updates on page 44 of the Detailed Operational Plan. Note that impacts to this operational component because of the COVID-19 pandemic were mostly to the schedules associated with the Geographic Data Processing and did not significantly impact the overall plan.

Updates to Existing/Baselined: DOP, Section 2.2 - Additional work is required to make decisions on the following questions:

- In what 2020 Census operations will addresses and features be updated and added? What are the expectations for the capture and availability of field updates? Available in real time? Available with the timeframe of the operations? Available for the next operation? Available for the final tabulation?
  - Approach: Resolve as part of 2017 Census Test Planning.
  - Decision by: August 2017.

The additional work was completed in 2017, and the associated updates were applied to the operational design for the 2020 Census. The following operations provided address updates as part of the 2020 Census: Update Leave (UL); Update Enumerate (UE), including Remote Alaska (RA); Group Quarters Enumeration (GQE) and its subcomponents Service-Based Enumeration, Domestic Violence Shelters, and Maritime Vessel Enumeration; Non-ID Processing (NID); Nonresponse Followup (NRFU) and its subcomponent Field Verification; Island Areas Censuses (IAC); and Enumeration at Transitory Locations (ETL). Feature updates were provided from the UE, UE-RA, and IAC field operations. Address and feature updates are not expected to be live or available during fieldwork. Realtime updating capability for fieldworkers was not tested leading up to the 2020 Census, and therefore no capability was available during the 2020 Census. However, office-based address adds during the NRFU operation were made available the next day for follow-up in the field. The address and feature updates are accounted for in the final tabulation data deliveries. Field operation delays caused by COVID pushed address and feature updates of MAF/TIGER to occur later than originally planned. Some Census Bureau processes still required an updated file to be delivered on the original schedule, so it was necessary to add a MAF extract delivery with the final inventory of decennial addresses.

Census results are also dependent on the delineation of various geographic areas to both tabulate and report person and household statistics. The primary sources for area updates were the following: the Boundary and Annexation Survey, the Participant Statistical Areas Program, ZIP Code Tabulation Areas, and Voting Districts. These programs are discussed more completely in the DOP.

The following table indicates the modifications that have occurred since the DOP was baselined:

| Section No. | Section Name   | Page | Change Rationale   | Original Wording   | Update  |
|-------------|--|------|--|--|---|
| 3.5.3       | Perform In-Office Operation Updates [GEOP/GDP 6-3.5.3]                                 | 47   | Active Block Resolution was discontinued in February 2017, because of a non-COVID change.  | NA   | NA  |
| 3.6         | Geographic Area Reconciliation Program (GARP) [GEOP/GDP 6-3.6]                         | 48   | The decision was made to use primarily headquarters (HQ) staff in GARP reviews. Some National Processing Center (NPC) staff also participated to support review of legal boundaries. | The output from the quality checks will be a list of potential issues that require attention from expert geographic reviewers (staff from NPC, HQ, and regional offices [ROs]/regional census centers [RCCs] depending on the type and nature of a given issue). The disposition listings (output from the automated checks) will be distributed according to their type to the appropriate staff at HQ, NPC, or the RO/RCC to be evaluated. | The output from the quality checks will be a list of potential issues that require attention from expert geographic reviewers (staff from <b>HQ or NPC</b> ). The disposition listings (output from the automated checks) will be distributed according to their type to the appropriate staff to be evaluated. |
| 3.6.4       | Potential issues will be sent to our trained GARP reviewers (at HQ, NPC, and/or RCCs). | 50   | The decision was made to use primarily HQ staff in GARP reviews. Some NPC staff also participated to support review of legal boundaries.   | Potential issues will be sent to our trained GARP reviewers (at HQ, NPC, and/or RCCs).   | Potential issues will be sent to our trained GARP reviewers (at <b>HQ or NPC</b> ).   |
| 3.6.5       | 3.6.5 Close GARP [GEOP/GDP 6-3.6.5]  | 50   | Describe more completely the scope of GARP Closeout  | NA   | The GARP team will conduct closeout activities, prepare for the next benchmark, and document lessons learned.   |

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